

Chapter 4

Ryan barely heard the guard's breath over his shoulder or the noise in the corridor anymore. His eyes were locked on his phone screen, begging it to respond. And then—it did.

The app loaded.

The spinning circle vanished, replaced by his banking dashboard.

Without a word, Ryan shrugged off the guard's grip. He didn't yell. Didn't even look at anyone. He simply tapped the screen and transferred \$300,000 straight from his account to the hospital's payment portal. The numbers on the screen glowed in confirmation, and he let his thumb linger there for a moment longer.

Then, slowly, he lifted his eyes and looked directly at the nurse who had mocked him the loudest. His voice was calm as he spoke.

"Check your system."

The nurse blinked, confused for half a second. An arrogant response was already forming on her lips when the hospital receptionist's desk phone rang sharply across the corridor.

The receptionist picked up, murmured a few words—and then her eyes widened.

She shot to her feet.

"We just got an alert!" she shouted. "three hundred thousand dollars—just came through to our system! It's real!"

The hallway fell into silence.

The guards, who only seconds ago had been gripping Ryan like a criminal, released their hands like they had touched fire. They stepped back, with their faces turning pale.

Everyone in the room froze. Even the ones who had been chuckling behind their phones stood there like statues.

For a moment, no one moved.

No one could make a sound.

Ryan remained standing there, his gaze at them was calm. He looked like a different man to everybody at that moment.

"That's two hundred and fifty thousand for my mother's surgery. Keep the rest for medicine and care."

The nurse's face drained of all color. Her lips parted, but no sound came out. She staggered a step backward, looking at Ryan like she had just seen a ghost.

Dr. Jerry looked from Ryan to the receptionist, as though trying to make sense of the moment. His mouth was opened, but nothing came. The numbers couldn't lie. The man they had dismissed like trash had just paid a quarter of a million dollars without blinking.

Whispers spread like wildfire along the corridor. Those who held up their phones to record Ryan's humiliation had brought down their phones.

"I can't believe it."

"Where did he get that kind of money?"

The nurse finally found her voice. It was weak and trembling as she spoke up.

"I... I didn't mean what I said," she stammered, attempting to laugh it off. "I was just joking—of course I didn't really mean I'd resign. It was sarcasm, you know, just to lighten the mood."

But her voice shook with each word she let out of her mouth.

She turned to the receptionist's desk, leaning over the monitor. "Check again. Maybe it's an error. Maybe the alert was for someone else, maybe... maybe another patient's bill got mixed into our account or—"

Now, to life the shame from herself, she was looking for every way to say the payment that entered was just a coincidence and not from Ryan.

Ryan's voice cut through her rambling.

"Check the name of the sender."

The nurse froze.

Her hand hovered over the mouse. Her mouth opened again, but nothing came out. Her pride was crumbling, her denial growing louder as she struggled to face the crowd to tell them Ryan really sent the money.

"There's no need to check," she said, flustered. "The money could have come from anyone. He probably just walked in when it happened. Coincidence, that's all."

Her argument was becoming ridiculous. Everyone could see it. She just didn't want to believe that Ryan could be the source of that money. She didn't want to believe that she had mocked and humiliated someone who could pay her salary for several months, if he wanted to.

Ryan said nothing, just looking at her with patience, waiting for her to check for confirmation.

He didn't argue or raise his voice.

But the doctor had had enough.

"Check the name, miss Rosa," Dr. Jerry snapped. "Read it out loud."

The nurse flinched as though she had been slapped.

She looked at the screen, her face twisting. Her eyes darted to Ryan, then back to the monitor repeatedly. The nurse stayed silent, already knowing what was there, but shame won't let her say it out.

"Read it," the doctor ordered again.

The nurse's hands trembled as her eyes scanned the sender information. She swallowed hard, then whispered, "Ryan... Ryan Walker."

Her voice echoed through the corridor as everyone else was silent.

The silence that followed was heavier than anything that had come before.

Even the nurses at the far end of the hallway stopped what they were doing.

The same Ryan Walker they had mocked, insulted, and tried to throw out had just paid more than the average doctor earned in a year, and he sent it out without flinching.

Dr. Jerry turned slowly toward her.

"You're fired."

The words dropped like a bomb.

The nurse gasped and fell to her knees in front of Ryan, grabbing at his pant leg with both hands, her voice was desperate now.

"Please, please sir. I beg you, please... I was just... doing my job. Please don't let them fire me. I didn't mean it, I swear—I didn't know. Please, forgive me."

But Ryan didn't even look down at her.

He didn't speak.

Her voice broke as she clung to his leg, sobbing now. "I- I... please. I was wrong." She stammered, begging.

Still, Ryan didn't look at her. His silence said everything. Her apologies had come too late.

Around them, the rest of the staff stood quietly. Some whispered in shock, others exchanged glances, unsure what to do or say. Even the guards looked ashamed now.

No one laughed anymore. No one dared to. Even the ones who had recorded the earlier mockery had quietly lowered their phones.

Ryan finally turned to Dr. Jerry, his eyes were cold.

"Make sure my mother's surgery is done today," he said. "If anything happens to her because of the delay you caused, you will lose your job too."

The doctor nodded quickly, his voice tight with fear. "Of course. Right away. I'll personally supervise everything, Mr. Walker. Please, don't call the management board. I—I'll take full responsibility."

Ryan said nothing more.

He turned and walked away, his steps calm and unhurried. The crowd stepped aside without a word, parting like water as he passed. No one dared to look him in the eye.

By the time he reached the hospital entrance, Ryan's phone buzzed in his hand. A new message.

Elizabeth.

He stared at the screen, not moving for a long second. Then he opened it.

Ryan, I'm so sorry for how I treated you earlier tonight. I shouldn't have embarrassed you in front of Julian. Please forgive me. I want you to come with me to Julian's birthday party tonight. I'll introduce you to everyone as my husband. I promise. In front of them all, I'll give you the respect you deserve.

Ryan stared at the message, his face was blank.

It didn't sound like her.

Not the woman who had told him to beg in the street just hours ago. Not the woman who had laughed as he pleaded for his mother's life.

Why the sudden change?

Why now?

Something wasn't right.